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Message Text

SECRET

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46
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W
---------- 104703
O 241336Z AUG 76
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6355
INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T CAIRO 11360

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: ENRG, PFOR, EG, IS, US
SUBJ: EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES IN GULF OF SUEZ: AMOCO HOLDING MARINER/ISRAELI DRILLING RIG MOVES TO NEW POSITION

REF CAIRO 11226,

1. ROSS CRAIG, AMOCO EGYPT MANAGER, INFORMED US AUG 24 THAT HE HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED BY NEW YORK HEAD OFFICE NOT TO MOVE MARINER DRILLING RIG TO POSITION 304.1 UNTIL HE RECEIVES SPECIFIC CLEARANCE. HE TRYING REACH NEW YORK BY PHONE AUG 24 TO SEE IF WORK CAN COMMENCE AUG 25. HE WILL KEEP US INFORMED ABOUT MARINER'S STATUS.

2. IN RELATED DEVELOPMENT, CRAIG ALSO TOLD US THAT ISRAELI DRILLING RIG, WHICH HAD PREVIOUSLY DRILLED DRY WELL IN FORMER ITALIAN CONCESSION OFF RAS GARRA, SHIFTED LOCATION SOMETIME OVER WEEKEND AUG 21-22. RIG NOW IN JACKED-UP POSITION IN LOCATION NORTH OF MORGAN AND EAST OF RAMADAN FIELDS. RIG SIGHTED BY AMOCO HELICOPTER SERVICING RAMADAN FIELD. EXACT LOCATION HAS NOT BEEN PIINPOINTED BY AMOCO AS YET, BUT RIG EVIDENTLY VERY CLOSE TO SITE OF MARINER'S PLANNED DRILLING ACTIVITY. CRAIG ATTEMPTING GET PRECISE FIX ON RIG TO DETERMINE IN WHICH AMOCO AREA IT IS LOCATED, I.E. IF IT IS IN AREA GRANTED PRIOR TO 1967 OR IN AREA GRANTED IN 1974. HE SAID HE HAS GIVEN TENTATIVE COORDINATES TO NEW YORK OFFICE BUT WILL PROVIDE US WITH MORE PRECISE ONES AUG 25.
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3. COMMENT: THERE IS POSSIBILITY THAT ISRAELI MOVE IS
RELATED TO PLANNED DRILLING ACTIVITIES OF MARINER. IF
ISRAELIS PLAN TO UNDERTAKE EXPLORATION IN AREAS GRANTED BY
GOE TO AMERICAN COMPANY, THIS WILL ADD ANOTHER DIMENSION TO
GULF OF SUEZ PROBLEMS. WE SHOULD ANTICIPATE STRONG DEMARCHE
FROM AMOCO, UNDER ABOVE CIRCUMSTANCES, AND FROM GOE AS WELL
ONCE EGYPTIANS BECOME AWARE.

4. A REVIEW OF ISRAELI SUEZ GULF INTENTIONS IN LIGHT OF
THIS DEVELOPMENT WOULD APPEAR VERY APPROPRIATE AT THIS TIME.
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